

REPORT OF THE
GORHAM TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM
September 1, 2020

Chairperson Phillips opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. There were 87 members of the public in attendance via zoom.

Roll Call: Chairperson Phillips, Councilors Shepard, Hartwell, Hager, Pratt, Kuech and Wilder Cross. Also in attendance were Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak, Director of Community Development Tom Poirier, and Town Clerk Laurie Nordfors.

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and VOTED to accept the minutes of the August 4, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting and the August 13, 2020 Emergency Town Council Meeting. **7 yeas**

Open Public Communications

Kathy Garrard made a request of the Council to consider reinstating the Board of Health.

Councilor Communications

Councilor Shepard reported that the Ordinance Committee met recently and discussed some items that they will bring to the Council in the future.

Councilor Pratt thanked Shaw Brothers for representing the Town of Gorham with their generous pledge to Maine Medical Center. He also congratulated Harvey Performance for their recent move into their new building and encouraged people to tour their new facility.

Councilor Wilder Cross reported that she attended two more webinars related to racial injustice. She also announced the next New Years' Gorham celebration is being planned with plenty of food and fun to welcome in a much needed New Year 2021.

Councilor Kuech also thanked Shaw Brothers and congratulated Harvey Performance. She also reported that she has attended several webinars this past month and also thanked the people of Gorham for being so passionate on several items and for reaching out to the Councilors with their comments.

Councilor Hager mentioned the new trash bag fee structure that will be discussed later in the agenda. He also reported that the next Finance Committee meeting will be on September 21st.

Councilor Hartwell remarked that he would like to get back to in person Council meetings soon. He also noted that he respectfully disagrees with the Chairpersons decision of not reading the many public comments that were submitted by e-mail

Chairperson Phillips reminded people that the Gorham Founders Festival will be Saturday, September 12th and Sunday, September 13th. On Saturday, there will be a craft fair at Shaw Gym along with the usual farmers market, dance classes put on by Atlantic Dance on the lawn and fireworks at the Old Race track at night. There will be a drive-in style fireworks display at the old race track. There will be a parade on Sunday at 3pm. You can find out more information on the website Gorham2020.com

Town Managers Report

Town Manager Paraschak reminded the public that Baxter Memorial Library and the Town Clerk's office is open to the public for walk in service normal hours. He also stated that the Community Development Department has relocated to the first floor of the Municipal Building to make way for the School Department to utilize the upstairs rooms of the Municipal Center for classrooms for the High School. He reported that the Main Street construction project is finally wrapping up and the Town was awarded \$55,000 from the Maine Cares Grant to help with Covid expenses. He also noted that the process for hiring a new Fire Chief has started and they will be interview candidates soon.

School Committee Report

Chairman Stewart McCallister reported the following:

First a HUGE THANK YOU to Ephrem, Tom, Cindy and Lee from the municipal center for working collaboratively with the School Department to assist us in addressing the needs of GHS for additional space. This will allow us to meet the 6ft physical distancing guidelines from CDC/MDOE required to open our schools in the yellow (hybrid) model. We are currently using Robie Gym, Shaw Gym (to include restrooms), Upstairs Tech. Classroom, Upstairs Community Development Office, and the Upstairs Superintendent's Conference room as classroom spaces for GHS students. Thanks to the hard work of those mentioned plus representatives from the School Department we were able to devise a way to share the use of these facilities that keeps students and school staff separated from municipal staff.

As part of the shared space agreement, the schools will be working with the Recreation Department to utilize an offsite facility at the South Gorham Baptist Church. This MOU has been developed and is ready to go! Thanks to Cindy Hazelton for her collaboration and flexibility! Another thanks goes out to Pastor Travis Bush and the Summit Community Church for their willingness to help! The MOU for the use of the municipal facilities is drafted right now and being revised with feedback from all stakeholders...should be done by the end of this week.

Schools will open for students in our hybrid model on Sept. 8. Group B will start on Sept. 8, Group A students on Sept. 9. As you know, some families are selecting fully remote options. Right now, approximately 9.5% of the total student population (or around 262 students) are electing the fully remote option K-12. This is much better than we had anticipated.

Our next School Committee regular meeting will be on September 9, 2020 beginning at 7 pm. The location will be at the High School in the auditorium.

Chairperson Phillips opened public hearing #1. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Order #20-93 Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Pratt and ORDERED, that the Town Council approve a new massage license for Jill Kristine Hayden. **7 yeas**

Chairperson Phillips opened public hearing #2. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Pratt and VOTED to waive the reading of Order #20-94 due to length. **7 yeas**

Order #20-94 Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Pratt and ORDERED, that the Town Council amend the Gorham Savings Bank Contract Zone as follows:

PROPOSED SECOND AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT ZONING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF GORHAM AND GORHAM SAVINGS BANK

This Second Amendment to the Contract Zoning Agreement made as of the ____ day of ____, 2020 by and between the Town of Gorham, a body corporate and politic, located in the County of Cumberland and State of Maine (hereinafter the "Town"), and Gorham Savings Bank, a mutual savings bank chartered under Maine with an office at 64 Main Street, Gorham, Maine (hereinafter "the "Bank"), amends the Contract Zoning Agreement between the Town and the Bank made as of December 10, 1996 (hereinafter "the Original Agreement," recorded in the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds at Book 12897, Page 190 and further amended on February 23, 1999 (hereinafter "the First Amendment," recorded in said Registry at Book 14640, Page 110) (collectively "the Agreement").

WHEREAS, the Bank has proposed to build a ground-mounted solar array and associated equipment with an approximate yield of 1.1 million kilowatt-hours annually, on Lot 2 as shown on the "Plan of Lots for Gorham Savings Bank by Sebago Technics, dated 8-24-98, revised 3-24-99, attached to the First Amendment as Exhibit A, to offset the Bank's electric costs for the Banks's adjacent operations center on Lot 1 and more than 16 locations across Maine; and

WHEREAS, the Bank intends to combine Lots 1 & 2 into a single lot; and

WHEREAS, while the Agreement allows as a permitted use "uses accessory to permitted uses," it does not specifically include roof- and ground-mounted solar arrays on the list of permitted uses; and

WHEREAS, while the proposed ground-mounted solar array is accessory to the Bank's existing operations center in that it will provide electricity to support the bank's operations and will not to be sold to the grid, the parties wish to clarify the Agreement to add ground-mounted solar arrays to the list of permitted uses since any use not specifically mentioned in the Agreement is a prohibited use; and;

WHEREAS, the layout and configuration of the ground-mounted solar array requires certain amendments to the Agreement with respect to buffering, yard, and setbacks to allow the ground-mounted solar arrays to operate effectively and generate sufficient electricity to support the Bank's operations; and

WHEREAS, this amendment to the Agreement is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan by supporting the sustainability of the environment and natural resources through new technologies and ideas that enhance the community's sustainability, is consistent with the existing and permitted uses within the underlying and existing zoning districts, only includes restrictions which related to the physical development or operation of the property, and is otherwise permitted pursuant to Section 1.1(G) of the Zoning Regulations and 30-A M.R.S. § 4352(8); and

WHEREAS, the Bank and the Town wish to further amend the Agreement to reflect these changes in the use of the Property.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises made by each party to the other, the parties covenant and agree as follows:

1. Section 4(d) of the Original Agreement is amended as follows:

Development proposals shall include a program of buffers including, but not limited to, an identification of their location, composition, maintenance and ability to remain compatible with large expanses of impervious surface or parking areas. All areas dedicated for mechanical appurtenances or waste disposal shall be screened from view. Buffering and screening be of a dense and continuance nature and shall incorporate trees, shrubs, fencing, berms and related elements deemed necessary by the Planning Board. No buildings, structures, parking areas or other improvements (other than fences, walls, ground-mounted solar arrays and associated equipment, or necessary roadway and utility crossings) shall be located in buffers. Along the exterior boundaries of the subdivision other than Route 202, buffers shall be at least 100 feet deep (150 feet on Lot 1 and Lot 2, first 100 feet to be trees) except in locations where ground-mounted solar arrays, associated solar equipment, and associated clearing of vegetation to prevent shade on solar panels are located, and where existing topography or the other requirements of this Contract Zoning Agreement would make that depth impractical or ineffective.

2. Section 4(h) of the Original Agreement is amended by adding the following sentence:
"Notwithstanding the provisions in this subsection, roof-and ground-mounted solar arrays and associated equipment comprised of industry-standard components and materials are specifically permitted."
3. Section 5(a) of the Original Agreement is amended by adding a new subsection (9) as follows:
"Roof- and ground-mounted solar photovoltaic arrays and associated equipment."
4. Section 5(e) of the Original Agreement is amended as follows:
 - a. Amend the minimum front, side, and rear yard to 40 feet.

- b. Add a new provision as follows: “The minimum setback of structures (other than buildings) from exterior boundaries of the Revised Plan other than Route 202 is 40 feet on Lot 1 and Lot 2. There is no minimum setback for a ground-mounted solar array from an interior property lot line when a solar project spans across abutting parcels of land with a common interior boundary lot line.”
- 5. The Bank shall provide public access to the Tannery Brook trail system between the upland edge of Tannery Brook and the solar project fence line.
- 6. The Bank shall record this Second Amendment to the Contract Zoning Agreement in the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds and shall submit proof of recording to the Town Planner before any site work is undertaken.
- 7. Except as specifically amended herein, all terms and conditions of the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

WITNESS:

TOWN OF GORHAM

By: _____

Ephrem Paraschak, Its Town Manager
 (Duly authorized by vote of the Gorham Town Council
 on _____, 2020)

GORHAM SAVINGS BANK

By: _____

Steve deCastro
 Its President and Chief Executive Officer

STATE OF MAINE
 CUMBERLAND, ss.

_____, 2020

Personally appeared the above-named Ephrem Paraschak, Town Manager of the Town of Scarborough, and acknowledged the foregoing to be his free act and deed in his said capacity, as duly authorized, and the free act and deed of said Town of Gorham.

Before Me,

 Notary Public

STATE OF MAINE
 CUMBERLAND, ss.

_____, 2020

Personally appeared the above-named Steve deCastro, President and CEO of Gorham Savings Bank, and acknowledged the foregoing to be his free act and deed in his said capacity, as duly authorized, and the free act and deed of Gorham Savings Bank.

Before Me

Notary Public

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and VOTED to amend the order to fix a typo error that reads Town Manager of the Town of Gorham not Scarborough. **7 yeas**

Order #20-94 VOTED as amended. 7 yeas

OLD BUSINESS

Order #20-95

Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Hager and ORDERED, that the Town Council adopts the following resolution:

Resolution to end systemic racism, the oppression/misrepresentation of minority groups, and to continue to ensure that law enforcement honors equal justice for all in Gorham.

WHEREAS, the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Aubrey, and other victims of police brutality and misconduct have ignited universal support of the Black Lives Matter movement; and

WHEREAS, Gorham residents have joined together in marches, vigils, and other forms of demonstrations to peacefully support the fact that black lives matter; and

WHEREAS, Gorham is a predominantly white community with a growing population representing diversity of color, culture, language, sexual preference; and

WHEREAS, Minority groups in Gorham have experienced discrimination in various forms; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Gorham is committed to educating all Gorham citizens about ending discrimination in any form; and

WHEREAS, Gorham's citizens have historically maintained a close and respectable relationship with our local law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Gorham Police Department strives to use precautionary measures in times of distress.

Now, THEREFORE, be it Resolved that the Gorham Town Council

1. Supports all town departments and members of the public to ensure equal justice for all, prevent any form of police misconduct, provide educational opportunities to accept and celebrate diversity and address racial discrimination; and
2. Affirms and acknowledges the fact that black lives matter; and
3. Recognizes that the Gorham Police Department has ensured the safety of local protests and has been supportive of the informational sessions on systemic racism; and
4. Supports the Gorham Police Department in its efforts to organize and create a law enforcement atmosphere conducive to welcoming people of color; and
5. Commits to providing the necessary resources to ensure that all town staff receive anti-bias training and that police officers continue to receive training on de-escalation; and
6. Encourages the Gorham Police Department to continue its comprehensive training of its officers in de-escalation, use of force and comprehensive reporting to state and national standards, and;
7. Encourages Gorham PD to make available on its website information on general department policies so that they can be more accessible to the public, excluding information that is statutorily confidential; and
8. Condemns any form of hatred or bigotry in the community against any person or group; and
9. Supports opportunities for the voices and stories of people of color and other minority groups in this community to be heard; and
10. Commits to addressing any members of its organizations or departments who are affiliated with any hate groups to the extent legally possible; and
11. Affirms it will stand against racism and other forms of discriminations while doing everything in its power to make certain the Town of Gorham is welcoming to people of color and other minority groups.

Chairperson Phillips announced that due to the many email comments and the length of some of them that she will not require the emails to be read out loud. The emails will be included in the minutes and also in the permeant records.

Councilor Hartwell made a motion to appeal the decision of the Chair to not read the email comments for Order #20-95. There was not a second and the motion failed.

Councilor Wilder Cross made the following open statement for Order #20-95

I am sponsoring this resolution for several reasons and I ask the other Councilors to see the importance of this resolution as it is now written.

After the resolution was tabled at last month's Town Council meeting, the group met to address each and every section of the resolution that raised concerns. They were able to work through the differences to prepare a revised draft, which they distributed to the Councilors for feedback. And in fact, some Councilors suggested additional changes that the group also considered. Their goal was to prepare a resolution that the Council would support tonight.

The Council and I (individually) have received several emails with passionate pleas to either to accept or reject the resolution.

The objections were aimed mostly at the use of the term "Black Lives Matter." Let me explain why this term is important to this group. Of course, all lives matter, which seems to be the argument. However, this resolution is aimed at systemic racism, not about being nice to everyone. Of course, we should be nice to everyone. We don't need a resolution to support that notion.

The truth of the matter is this. Not everyone is treated with the same amount of niceness. We councilors are all Caucasian human beings and we have not been discriminated against, bullied, ostracized simply because our skin color is white.

Glenn Cummings, President of USM wrote in his letter supporting the resolution that almost 20% of USM's student population identify as people of color and the number is growing. These students play a major role in creating a positive and dynamic campus community that extends into the Town of Gorham.

He continued to write that USM neither opposes nor endorses the organization of Black Lives Matter, but they feel very strongly about the Black Lives Matter movement. Legendary civil rights leader and longtime Georgia Representative, the late, John Lewis reflected on the Black Lives Matter Movement in his first television interview following the death of George Floyd. Lewis, one of the co-leaders of the March from Selma to Montgomery said, " the Black Lives Matter Movement feels and looks different. It is so much more massive and all-inclusive. There will be no turning back."

In support of Lewis' declaration, the Movement itself, and Black, Indigenous and People of Color everywhere, USM declares that Black Lives Matter. Period. When asked why not proclaim that all lives matter, President Cummings answered "The inconvenient truth is that history provides plenty of evidence that the lives of Black, Indigenous and People of Color haven't mattered as much as white lives. Saying all lives matter misses the point and is, in fact, hurtful."

People of Color do not have the same privilege, and this is true in Gorham just as it is in most places. This resolution does not advocate support for the Black Lives Matter organization, but rather it addresses the fact that Black Lives Matter. Period. I support this resolution!

The following people spoke in favor of Order #20-95:

Hannah Sirois, Kristie Grand, Emilia Dahlin, Kyle Ouillette, Kathryn Morin, Imani Clark, Naomi Schucker, Eileen Armstrong, Miles Obrey, Christine Dyke, Joanne Romano, Sarah Rimknus, Julie Mulkern, Nora Schucker, Miriam Beshire, Kathy Priovaz, Ryanne Joslin, Linda Webb, Christie Paul, Jack Wu, Ibn Baba, and Jackie Mendez.

The following people spoke in opposition of Order #20-96:

Melissa Spicer, Timothy Sandeno, Linda Pearson, Jim Means, Cory Goddell, Melinda Larson, and Kylee Densmore.

The following pages are e-mail comments received on Order #20-95:

I am writing to you to state my support for the Black Lives Matter resolution.

Like the overwhelming majority of people in Gorham, I am white. My guess is that most of us have had little interaction with the police aside from maybe being pulled over for speeding through town or having a headlight out. In my limited interactions with the Gorham Police Department, I can honestly say that the officers have been professional and I would even say personable. It would be easy for me to pass off my experiences with the police as the norm. They are normal for us who are white. We don't fear the police. Unfortunately, this is not always the case for people of color in our community.

A lot of people will speak tonight on both sides of this issue. Most of them will be white. Tonight, I ask that you listen hard to what the people of color in our community are saying. Their experiences need to be heard and validated. For far too long, we have passed off our 'white' experience as theirs. Tonight we need to listen. We need to hear how their experiences are different than our own. Tonight we need to acknowledge the unfortunate truth in our society, that not all people are treated equally under the law.

Do all lives matter? Yes! Of course, they do. No one has said that they don't. All lives matter and we should call out and fight against all the ways that people, all people, are discriminated against or are oppressed by systems beyond their control. There are more -ism(s) in this country than just racism which need to be addressed. But now is not the time. In light of all that is happening in our country right now; because black people are still 3 times more likely to be killed by police officers than their white peers; because calling the police on an innocent black man is still being used as a weapon by white people to excuse their own bad behavior; Now is the time to stand up and say enough is enough. If we care about all lives we must start tonight by acknowledging that Black lives do matter in the town of Gorham.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jason Schucker

Dear members of the Gorham Town Council,

I'm writing in strong support of this proposed resolution. I think it's important that it was written by People of Color who are part of the Gorham community, with input from key stakeholders including Chief Sanborn. It's also important that the resolution contains specific, relevant, actionable items that Gorham will take to help end systemic racism. The alternate resolution that has been proposed falls short on both of these basic, foundational elements in that was written for another community, and is overwhelmingly vague and general in tone. Where the former reflects a community that recognizes systemic racism exists, the latter seems to imply that it doesn't; the community merely needs to be 'on the lookout' for it.

I understand that the phrase 'Black Lives Matter' has been a source of contention in the discussion of this subject. I would like to affirm that 'Black Lives Matter' in no way suggests that other lives don't. Those words lift up the experiences of people who have historically, and still, experience different treatment because of race. To put it in a different context, if I'm an advocate against elder abuse, does that mean I condone child abuse? Of course not... and if anything, people would assume I find it equally as reprehensible. I'm glad that the members of our community who wrote the proposed resolution include 'the fact that Black Lives Matter'. It's important, and overdue, that these voices are amplified.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my input, and thank you for your work for the Gorham community.

Heather Bettencourt
113 South St.

Dear Town Council,

I would like to start by thanking all of you for being a member of the Gorham Town Council.

I ask all of the members this evening to ask themselves honestly regarding **systemic racism in our town of Gorham. Do not kid your selves we have it here in Gorham.** How many of you would be a little " nervous" walking to Hannaford after dark with a black student /man walking behind you ? Honestly all of us would be. How many of you were very concerned about your families, property, children when Courage House opened , a lot of us. I do not want to take your time to make list of examples of racism in Gorham but it is here and will thrive and grow like an invasive poisonous weed if we do not address the issues in our community . Let Gorham be a leader in this difficult time for our country, let Gorham be a healer in this time of polarization and shout " **BLACK LIVES MATTER**" as it has not been in the past.

Lynn Kalloch
1 Belmont Terr
Gorham, Maine
207 839-6514

Good evening,

I am writing to speak out against the Gorham BLM Resolution as outlined in the proposed order #20-95 of the Town Council meeting. Below are the reasons I cannot support this resolution and urge the Town Council to vote against it or allow the Gorham BLM group to revise and submit it one final time. I will start with my 4 biggest points:

1. I do not think that the Town Council should be acknowledging and supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and organization as it is a Marxist politically charged movement. By acknowledging and supporting it, you are making a political statement and you are supposed to be non-partisan. I believe in the statement black lives matter, but not in Black Lives Matter. How it is written is all the difference between the statement and the movement/organization. The creators of this proposal heard what the Town Council had to say about the verbiage last month, but yet still chose to keep BLM in their proposal.
2. It is not the job of the town to educate all Gorham citizens about ending any form of discrimination.
3. The wording of Gorham "citizens" should be residents. By using the word citizens, that is separating citizens from non-citizens. It says that anyone living in Gorham who is not a citizen does not need antidiscrimination education. If the town so chooses to be educators, which they should not be, it needs to be for all residents. The wording creates a divide.
4. Who will decide what is a hate group so that any members of town organizations and departments are addressed to the extent legally possible? I believe that BLM is a hate group whose mission is to overthrow the government and destroy America as we know it. They have zero respect or regard for individuals' property or police lives. One of their chants is "ACAB" which stands for all cops are bastards. They choose which lives matter, which are only black people killed or shot by white officers. Why don't black officers shot or killed by white civilians' matter to them? Why don't other black killings matter to them? They have a specific targeted group and have created a war on white people and law enforcement officers. They promote racism against white people. They openly admit that they want America to burn to the ground. It is fueled by hate and racism.
 - a. If you vote this through with this in it, I will be calling for all BLM supporters that are members of town organizations and departments to be addressed to the full extent legally possible, since I firmly believe that BLM is a hate group. Two names that I know of right now that are supporting Gorham BLM are Councilwoman Virginia Wilder-Cross and guidance counselor, at GHS, Trisha Cherry who both helped the BLM group write this proposal.

A founder of the Gorham BLM group and GARD stated that Gorham needs to cater to its minorities. Cater was the word used. Let that statement sink in for a minute. One of her goals is to have the town of Gorham "cater to minorities". She didn't say treat minorities equal, she said catered to. Do not let the Gorham BLM group fool you by saying they do not stand for the national BLM agenda. They do. Another founding member of both groups stated that "property can be replaced, a life cannot" when in a conversation regarding rioting and looting. That speaks volumes as to his stance on rioting and looting. This is their mind set. Why would you support a proposal put forth by people that believe those statements?

I use the Gorham BLM group as the creators of the proposal, and I want to explain why I do since it is said that GARD put this together. The GARD group and Gorham BLM group are the same. All but a couple members of GARD are members of Gorham BLM. GARD's email address is GorhamBLM04038@gmail. They are the same group, no matter which label they are using to fit their narrative. It is very apparent when looking at both groups' web pages. Anything that the founders have been posting about their proposal to the Town Council have all been posted and discussed on the Gorham BLM page, but yet is said to be written by GARD. I believe that GARD was created to have a name that they could hide behind and gain support from the community that is not supporting BLM.

The resolution proposal from the Gorham BLM group is saying that there is a systemic racial issue in Gorham, but nowhere does it state where it exists or real solutions for where it exists. It states that black people were killed in another part of the country, mentions the BLM movement, wants trainings that are already in place, wants the town to become educators in discrimination, wants people supporting hate groups that work for the town to be held legally accountable, states that the police did their jobs well and ensured their safety during their protests (in which it cost the town approximately \$19,000 for the protests and event according to GPD Chief of police), that we are a predominantly white community, and asks for information from GPD be posted on its website when anyone can already ask for that information thanks to the freedom of information act. What exactly are we resolving? I have asked that question to the proposal creators and supporters and can never get an answer other than we have systemic racism.

I support the second proposal as it has all inclusive language and does not state anything that the town can be held legally responsible for. I do not care that it is the same thing that Cape passed. It is to the point and says that the town is against racism, bias and any other form of discrimination. Isn't that the point of having a resolve about this? It is clear and concise and one that I believe the town of Gorham residents could all support.

On a side note, I would like the Town of Gorham to no longer allow any group to be able to chalk any part of town property. Once it is allowed, by law you cannot say who and who cannot chalk any town property and you cannot say what and what cannot be written. The town can decide what to remove after it is written if it is allowed. I personally do not want anyone to be allowed to chalk the town property and I certainly do not want any of my tax dollars used for cleaning it up. What was allowed at the GMS by the Gorham BLM group should have never happened.

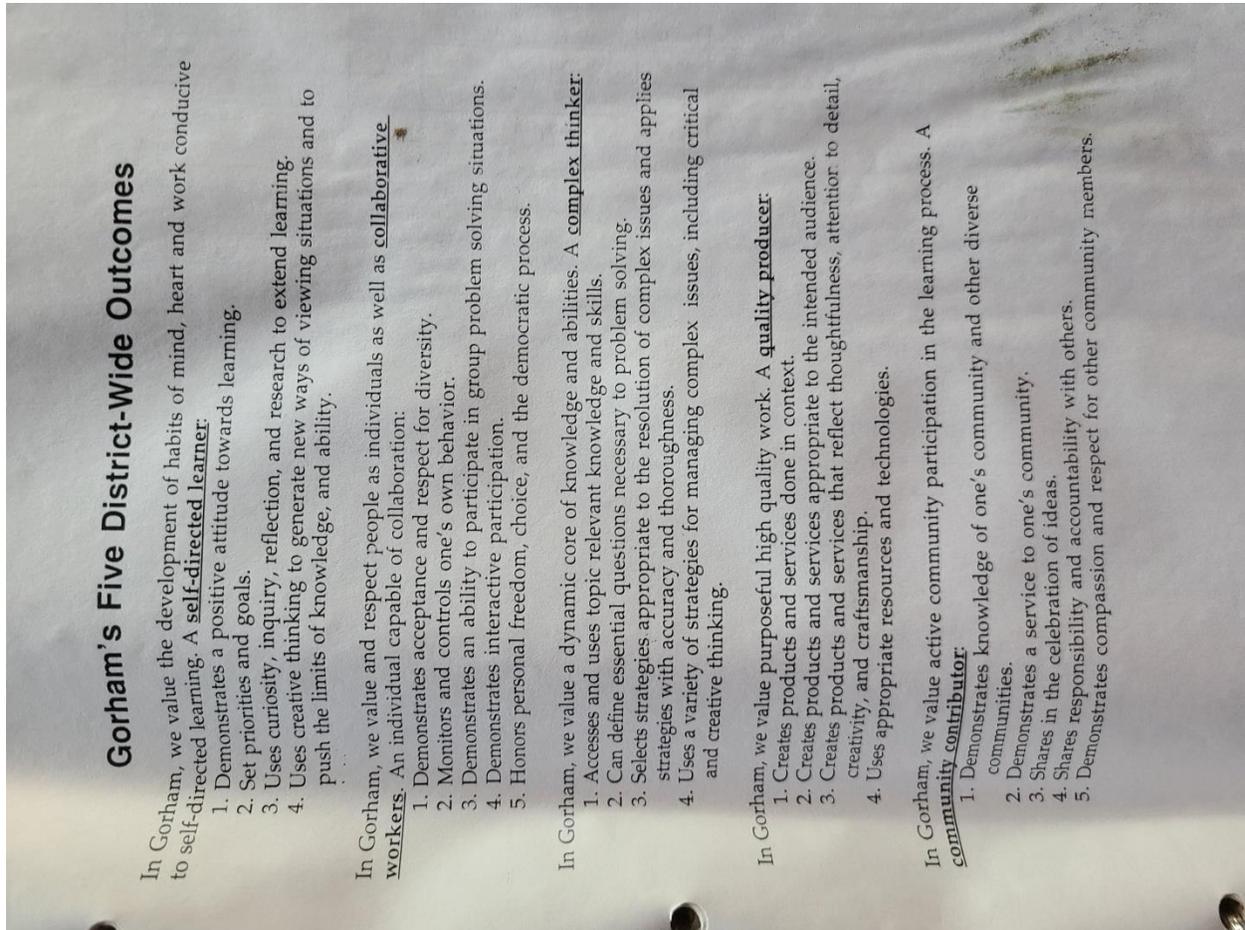
Thank you for your time and all that you do for Gorham and all our residents.

Best,

Melinda Larsen

Good Afternoon,

This is from 1997, my senior year at Gorham HS. We have always implemented positive fundamentals for learning into our students and school systems. Pay attention to Line #1 in the second paragraph.



I just thought I'd share as a reminder that we have always taught this town to embrace diversity and I have not seen any viable evidence that supports a radical agenda such as BLM to be enforced into our curriculums. I have yet to see any evidence-based facts that racism even exists in Gorham. What I do see are a number of newer residents that are unfamiliar with the town's long lived acceptance of diverse community as the main supporting parties and advocates of the groups BLM and GARD. Perhaps we need to dive into our history and educate these newer residents of our long-lived belief systems rather than entertaining any new and unjustified changes to the school system.

Sincerely,

Kylee Densmore
Gorham Resident

Dear Town Council Members of Gorham:

I am writing in support of the Resolution to end systemic racism, the oppression/misrepresentation of minority groups, and to continue to ensure that law enforcement honors equal justice for all.

The courage and work of the group of Gorham residents who have brought this forward is astounding. Their willingness to name their experiences and formulate a vision of a just town is true leadership.

The process that occurred during the previous Town Council, and many of the subsequent letters denouncing the Resolution are proof that the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion has barely begun in the town of Gorham, and must be supported by every person and organization, be they public or private.

We have been warned by Robin DiAngelo in her book “White Fragility” not to back away from discussions that make us uncomfortable, dominating a discussion without listening to the voices affected, assuming that a course or two in diversity training makes us “aware”, and expecting those affected to document their every experience and teach white people. All of these I saw during the last discussion and contained in many submitted responses.

Passing the Resolution calls white people of Gorham to seriously address the racism of our thoughts, ideas, and assumptions and how we have structured those into our organizations and systems of government. Not taking action to support the Resolution is abdicating our responsibility and reinforcing white privilege.

I urge you to pass the Resolution that is before you.

Rev. Christine Dyke

Gorham Resident

Lead Minister, First Parish Congregational Church, UCC, Gorham

Dear Town Council Members,

This summer, our kids expressed interest in making lawn signs like the ones they had seen around town. One said, "Kids Against Racism", one drew a peace dove, another read "Black Lives Matter", etc. We proudly placed them on our lawn. We were prepared for a few negative comments and we'd hear an occasional yell or cheer from cars passing. We carefully explained to our kids that not everyone agreed with the messages on our signs, but that we, and other people, thought they were beautiful and important. About a month ago we found paintball canisters all over our lawn. Someone had tried to shoot our signs, but failed. We quietly cleaned them up. A week or so after that a man drove by and screamed, "White Power" as our children (some of whom are kids of color) played in the yard. We called the police and they responded with compassion and advice in the case of further incidents. Two weeks ago we made a new big wooden sign, as the ones the kids made had started to show some wear. One side read "Black Lives Matter" and the other was a rainbow. That sign lasted one night before it was stolen. The "Kids Against Racism" sign was stolen the following night. Our six-year-old, who made it, hoped someone would return it. We again called the police, and they again responded with care and reported that night patrols around our house would be increased.

The kids were sad and quiet. They didn't understand why someone would take something they worked on, something that spoke out against racism, from their own yard. They hoped "maybe they took it to put in their own yard because they couldn't make their own signs." It felt like a violation of our safety and sense of community.

Last Sunday morning a little before 8AM, our dog barked while looking out the window. Our kids said, "Mom, there are a bunch of people on our front lawn..." We looked outside and saw that at least 20 masked Gorham community members were decorating our lawn with beautiful hand made signs. They not only replaced our signs that had been stolen, but also helped to repair our sense of community. The kids and us were moved beyond words.

CALL TO ACTION: We believe that systematic racism is present in our nation as well as in our community. Our experience is just one example of the overt racism in this town. Covert racism and systemic racism are often not as obvious. We can personally assure you, as white parents of kids of color, that both obvious racism AND systematic, covert racism exist in Gorham. People of color in our community deserve their voices to be heard, their experiences to be acknowledged, and lives to be equally as important as their white counterparts. It is our responsibility, as a community, to engage in policy making that recognizes the voices of our brown and black community members and ensures racism is no longer welcome here. We support a resolution written BY the people of color in our community to be adopted by the town council.

Sincerely,

Emily Stevens and Lia Mackenzie

Dear Councilors

My name is Charlie Pearson and I am a Gorham resident. At your last meeting, I submitted a lengthy review objecting to the wording of the proposed Black Lives Matter/systemic racism resolution because it endorsed partisan political activity, failed to include all minorities, and contained language that was overbroad or technically incorrect. The revised resolution contains a few corrections that I recommended but still endorses partisan political activity to which I object. As I continue to ponder this resolution, I am struck by how “systemic racism” has become the newest political and national media buzzword. CNN anchors have even referred to millions of Americans as racists and bigots. If America is truly guilty of fostering systemic racism, how did Barak Obama become our 44th President and win reelection? How did Colin Powell become a four-star general and the 12th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as the 65th Secretary of State? How did African Americans and other minorities become Presidential Cabinet members, Generals, Senators; Congressional Representatives; State Governors, Lieutenant Governors, and Legislators; Mayors and Police Chiefs of major US cities; CEOs of major US companies; and multi-million dollar celebrities of all genres? Granted, America does not have a perfect history and is not perfect today. However, America is still the greatest country in the world and offers the best opportunity for minorities to succeed, and your resolution falls flat in recognizing this. I note that Europeans sometimes brand Americans as being racist, but tell me which of those countries, including the so called socialist ones, have ever been led by a person of color, or had their military commanded by one? Ask any refugee or immigrant where their first choice of residence is and they will emphatically cry out: “USA.” Also, I am concerned about the line “committed to educating all Gorham citizens about ending discrimination in any form.” Is that supposed to be a green light to the School Department to force students to add anti-racism courses to their curriculum? If so, I am strongly opposed to it. As a former college professor, I believe we have too many young people who can’t make change from a dollar to add anti-racism classes to their required course load. 2 As I stated in my August submission, I condemn racial discrimination, bigotry, and police misconduct toward any American but abhor protests involving violence and chaos. I stand for the national anthem and pledge of allegiance and always respect our flag because as a veteran I was willing to give my life for this country if needed. Therefore, I wholeheartedly endorse Councilor Hartwell’s Proposed Order #20-96 welcoming all people to Gorham. Cape Elizabeth adopted a similar resolution instead of one like 20-95. Proposed Order 20-96 covers the issues and concerns in a much more non-partisan manner without casting stones at our great country or town. Respectfully submitted, //S//Clinton C. Pearson Clinton C. (Charlie) Pearson, JD

Dear members of the Gorham Town Council

Please accept this letter in support of the antiracist statement of Councilwoman Wilder-Cross. The issue of racial justice is extremely important to the University of Southern Maine and to all of us. Almost 20% of our student population identify as people of color. And the number is growing. These students play a major role in creating a positive and dynamic campus community. Concretely, these students live in the residence halls on our Gorham campus and contribute to the town of Gorham's economy. USM is also proud to be a signatory on the Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce and State of Maine Chamber of Commerce endorsement of an antiracist commitment.

Below please find our anti-racist statement and why we support the Black Lives Matter movement. While we neither oppose nor endorse the organization of Black Lives Matter, we feel very strongly about the Black Lives Matter movement. Our statement below outlines our rationale for the support. We hope that the town of Gorham endorses the resolution tonight in the spirit of the greatest principles of our country.

Thank you,

Glenn Cumming
President
University of Southern Maine

Dear USM Community,

Weeks before his passing, legendary civil rights leader and longtime Georgia Representative John Lewis reflected on the Black Lives Matter Movement in his first network television interview since the death of George Floyd. The co-leader of the March from Selma to Montgomery and the widely acknowledged conscience of Congress said the Black Lives Matter Movement, “feels and looks so different. It is so much more massive and all-inclusive.”

Lewis also made this firm prediction about the Movement’s impact: “There will be no turning back.”

We agree. And in support of Lewis’ declaration, the Movement itself, and Black, Indigenous and People of Color everywhere, **we say Black Lives Matter**. Period.

We recognize that to reach our goals — to be student-focused every day, to be a great university to work for, and to uphold the principles of equity and justice — we must add our voices to the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Some, perhaps motivated by a sense of fairness, may ask why we do not proclaim that all lives matter.

The inconvenient truth is that history provides plenty of evidence that the lives of Black, Indigenous and People of Color haven’t mattered as much as white lives. And there are ample reasons why saying that [all lives matter misses the point and is, in fact, hurtful](#). If there is doubt about the inequities and injustices that Black, Indigenous and People of Color experience every day and the urgency of the Black Lives Matter movement, please consider these realities:

- The pandemic continues to claim Black lives at more than three-and-a-half times the rate of white mortality.
- The multiplier effects of racism and the pandemic are prompting mental health experts to warn of a looming increase in suicidal ideation among Black Americans.
- Intentionally constructed and deeply ingrained racist policies continue to deny Black, Indigenous and People of Color access to education, employment, housing, healthcare, justice and voting — and increase their chances of incarceration.
- Too many syllabi feature perspectives that reflect and reinforce white privilege.
- Too few positions of leadership and influence in government, industry, and academia are held by Black, Indigenous and People of Color.
- Too many people continue to pose defiantly with Confederate flags to frame white supremacy as tradition and heritage.

For all of these reasons — and until we eradicate the systems of racism that harm Black, Indigenous and People of Color daily — **we must never tire of declaring that Black Lives Matter.**

Dr. Glenn Cummings
President, University of Southern Maine

Dear Counselors:

I am writing a request as a concerned 20 year resident of the Town of Gorham. I am unable to attend tonight's meeting therefore, my thoughts, opinions and strong heartfelt request regarding the subject at hand "Antiracism in Gorham" are here in this letter.

From the time that you and I were born, our lives have been met with decisions that would lead us either into success and happiness or failure and despair. When we were children sometimes our friends would guide us or tempt us in our fate, but most of the time we were supported by our families, teachers, ministers and the productive members of our society in making our decisions and making the right decisions. We trusted them when we were in doubt. If we made the wrong decision we learned and became just that much smarter to move onward and upward.

Sometimes though, once we became adults and those around us became less involved with us we have found ourselves alone in our decision making process. This position forces us to ask more questions, research the facts and statistics, and just like in a game of pool (which I love to play) we must imagine with our minds where the next shot would line up based on our final actions. Life-altering decisions can run the gamut for example taking a new job, buying a home and deciding what town to live in, having to choose between two different surgeries to save a life or maybe where to send our children to school that would affect them for the rest of their lives. These life-altering decisions usually include communicating with people or groups of people which we are not familiar with, and that makes it just that much harder. So, we must **WORK** that much harder, and not carelessly or frivolously jump in with two feet.

Tonight, you are asked to make a decision to alter our town rules and guidelines and reprimands by a group that I assume you don't even know. Actually, nobody knows. You don't have adults (like when you were young) around to lead you except each other now.

You will need to research, ask more questions, study your strategy surrounded in an environment of calm and peace, not in white noise and pressure. This is not the time for biased evidence or facts thrown at you or demands of stomping strangers. This is your time to lead and demand your terms and demand your timeframe.

You **MUST** be professional, and lead your town that consists of **all** walks of life, **all** opinions, **all** beliefs, and **all** backgrounds into a winning resolve. You need to do this because you are our representatives for the town of Gorham as an entirety - **NOT** for the special interests and specific individuals.

Those agendas and residents that encountered discrimination and racism deserve more individual attention - one by one facing their complaints and troubles and resolving their issues of peaceful living to the high standards of Gorham. They are members in our town and they do need an outlet and special consideration, but they do not represent the entirety or the majority and it is wrong to handout special treatment or add rules across the board for the majority based upon a few and based upon the emotions and individual preferences of each Counselor.

You represent Gorham **NOT** your own household. This needs to be done as a whole. You must keep in consideration of the 17000 residents. It is in my opinion, that this has not even been considered and to make a decision tonight based on minimal study would be grossly negligent.

To open your arms and fall at the feet of a group that has admitted they are Marxist based and have proven they are reveling in violence is absolutely irresponsible and your final actions and decision could hurt a lot more people in the future in Gorham, than the amount of people who “claim” they have been hurt in the past.

These activists are taking advantage of our quiet non- proactive way of living and somewhat innocence of mind to spread their cancer throughout not just Gorham, but the final destination of the country.

Don't be fooled. Do your homework. Know thy enemy.

Talk with those who have been marginalized, humiliated, ostracized due to color. Find a solution. Make amends and open communications but do it on OUR terms – the town of GORHAM as a whole through meetings, surveys and votes. Take the year to research, study, seek reliable sources to improve the subject of racism as a **WHOLE**.

Most importantly, you run this train - not any outside groups that have a zero tract record, have made zero contributions to the town of Gorham, and frankly zero references and credibility.

I have never seen a ransom note sent before a kidnapping, but if you play the game and meet their **DEMANDS** beforehand, Gorham will be held hostage and never released and your problems will have just begun and you will not have any way out.

Lead, do not follow.

Suzanne Roberge
Gorham, ME

Dear Gorham Town Councilors

My name is Jim Means, a Gorham resident since 1995. I have never seen such divisiveness during that time as I am now witnessing over the Proposed Order # 20-95. I cannot attend the September Town Council Meeting and request that this letter be publicly read, in full, by the Town Council or its directed person during the meeting.

I am disappointed that Councilor Cross did not heed the advice given by Gorham resident Charlie Pearson at the August Town Council Meeting. I request that his letter, attached, be reread publicly at the September Town Council meeting, in full, prior to any vote on this order by the Town Councilors. I fully support Charlie Pearson's letter.

I have many problems with the proposed order. You should be mindful the Black Lives Matter is not what it appears to be by the knowledgeable. It is a well funded political movement with a history of violence. These facts have been well established. Your condoning the movement would forever more make the Gorham Town Council a partisan group, which has been completely avoided up until this moment. The consequences of this Council supporting a violent and radical political movement will forever change the fabric and quality of life in Gorham.

By naming three individuals being the victims of police brutality and misconduct you then must name the individuals killed by the Black Lives Matter movement. They number more than 60 during the past three months in our Country.

This order makes many unfounded claims. Among them are that there is universal support of the Black Lives Matter movement. This is not true. Many of Gorham residents have expressed this to you directly, or to me. The order wants us to believe that we have "systemic racism" in our Town. I have a friend who has resided in Gorham for many years and does not believe this is true, furthermore the friend (a person of color) condemns the Black Lives Matter movement and has heeded the advice of family members to remain silent for fear of retribution. Given what has happened, and is widely documented, in other American cities during the past three months, I understand their fear. This is a very sad state of affairs in Gorham and in our great Nation.

This proposed order should be voted down. The order that Councilor Hartwell is proposing (Order # 20-96) is one that is well thought out, accomplishes all the wanted objectives, and should be supported with your vote.

ALL LIVES MATTER.

Thank you and God Bless America.

I strongly support the resolution sponsored by Councilor Wilder-Cross for the Town of Gorham to assist with ending systemic racism. It is important to explicitly acknowledge that Black Lives Matter. To say that all lives matter is a failure to acknowledge the burden of racial discrimination borne by people due simply to the color of their skin and a display of unwillingness to hear the voices of black and brown skinned people.

The requests in the resolution are all reasonable and the specific actions including anti-bias training of town staff and support of Gorham Police Department efforts are positive and productive. The efforts of all the individuals who worked on this resolution are commendable. I urge the council to pass this resolution.

Amy Leddy
2 Robie St
Gorham, Maine

Dear Councilors,

I am a resident of the Town of Gorham. My name is Catherine Lara. I am writing to object to the amended Black Lives Matter Resolution that you are considering.

First, the notion that the Black Lives Matter movement has been universally accepted is false. Mentioning the name of a self-proclaimed Marxist political group bent on reshaping our country in any resolution in ANY town is an affront to the ideals that we hold as Americans. Many civil rights leaders, including some who marched during the Civil Rights era, strongly condemn some of the false narratives touted by the Black Lives Matter Movement and the idea of systemic racism. These include :

Horace Cooper.....Walter Williams.....Shelby Steele....Clarence Page....Wilfred Reilly.....Senator Tim Scott....Robert Woodson...Larry Elder...Pastor Jerold Scott....Colonel Alan West....David Webb.....Burgess Owens....Star Parker...Alveda King....Carol Swain.....Ben Carson...John James....Jason Whitlock.... Thomas Sowell....David J Harris...Daniel Cameron....Dr. Harold A Black...Peter Kirsanow.....and **countless others.**

This resolution states its purpose is "to end systemic racism, the oppression/misrepresentation of minority groups . . ." We live in times where the words Racist and Racism are being tossed around very casually. Words matter. To accuse someone or groups of people of being racist is a serious accusation not to be taken lightly. The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines racism as "**a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race**". By accepting this resolution, you are admitting this to be true, and quite frankly it would seem that every one of you, and especially Administrators and Teachers in our schools have turned a blind eye to all these injustices that were happening around you. If there are facts that support these serious accusations then I would think you all need to step down today....or at the very least an investigation be launched.....because **words matter.**

Gorham is a town that is growing as one of the top Maine places to live. Yes, we are a predominantly white town...OKAY? I witness people of all skin shades, cultures, religions, political affiliations, style of dress, shapes and sizes....I witness them talking at the grocery store, eating together at restaurants, seated next to each other at a HS football game, in line to vote....EVERYWHERE. I am not denying that some people might have experienced some bias at some times. People have biases. This is the human experience. The moderators of the Gorham Black Lives Matter have frequently posted their biases on their Facebook page. They project their own ideas of white privilege and implicit bias on people they don't even know based on their skin color. A re-post and liked by Moderators stating: "As we take on white supremacy in our towns and cities, white America is going to have to grapple with the fact that they have no savior--that we are coming for the real institutions that have oppressed us and they and their sad broken muppet of a president can't stop us". They accuse Councilor Hartwell of completely railroading everything the organizers have been doing. They have stated that an "all-white council is wordsmithing a document that was written by people facing these issues. " They state: "it is absurd for a white man to propose a resolution to replace the black and brown voices in our town"

You are allowed to have biases, no matter how right or wrong they might seem to others. I personally don't think the Town Council members are sitting around making decisions based on their whiteness but those are the opinions of some Moderators of the Gorham BLM Facebook page. We choose our friends, jobs, places we shop, places we live, shows we watch, newspapers we read, places we eat etc...all based on our likes and dislikes and biases. In the United States of America we are free to do this. What we

cannot do is deny anyone their civil rights based on our personal beliefs. What is so demoralizing to me is that in the year 2020, we are talking about being Black, Brown, White, Hyphenated Americans and many other of those boxes that we are asked to check.....all political monikers that only serve to separate us instead of unite us. I believe this resolution only serves to separate us as well. **Words matter.**

Lastly, #10 "addressing any members affiliated with any hate groups". I spoke up against this at the last meeting. This is an affront to one's rights to belong to cultural, religious, political or other organizations of their choosing. The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is the current go to civil rights advocacy nonprofit for identifying hate groups. In 2019, the SPLC tracked groups and associations in the United States and claimed over 950 of them as HATE GROUPS. Under their guidelines and your resolution, I would have to watch my back if I were a Gorham employee. I am a Catholic (SPLC lists several Catholic organizations as Hate Groups). I am a supporter of the Family Research Council (SPLC listed Hate Group). I support legal immigration and I am against sanctuary cities. The SPLC would label me extremist and hateful. I could go on, but I am sure you understand what a legal mess this would mean for Gorham. Keep in mind that the SPLC had placed world renowned neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, on their EXTREMIST WATCH LIST.

For the record, I am anti-racist and anti-ANYTHING that infringes on ANYONE'S civil rights or prevents them from reaching their full potential in the United States of America. The proposed resolution wording is something that takes us back in time, instead of moving us forward in American ideals. We are not a perfect town or country....but judging by the line of people fleeing countries and wanting to come here.....we are pretty darn good. Let us resolve to treat everyone with kindness and respect and adhere to Martin Luther King's dream that we should live in a nation that judges us on the content of our characternot on the color of our skin.

Respectfully,

//S// CATHERINE LARA

Dear Town Council Members:

Thank you for serving and devoting so much of your time to something I either cannot or am not willing to do. Yours is much too often a thankless service. I wish to commend you on your diligence in seeking fair and equal treatment of all people under the law and as regards to town policies. I must, however, speak against tonight's Proposed Order #20-95. I am personally offended by the accusations made in the whereas clauses, which assume, without any proof, that racism is systemically present among our population and specifically within our police force. There is an assumption akin to a verbal lynching that has condemned untried police officers as having acted with criminal brutality and misconduct. It has also made the mistaken claim that there is universal support for a movement called Black Lives Matter. While some residents, a very small percentage and of impressionable age, have marched or sat in vigil, which is their right to peacefully do, that is no indication that there is some surge of support from our community in support of any organization that seeks the wholesale dismantling of our society. The very mention of Black Lives Matter in the context of universal support would presume, that if approved by this Council, that Gorham supports their tenets, to include defunding of police departments. Such a radical position is most definitely not universal, and I would hardly assume, the position of this town. If the intent was simply to affirm equal justice for all, I think it can be done without the condemnations of your protectors, neighbors, friends, and constituents, as well as the condescending position that we need to be educated. I also believe it can be done without overt or implicit support of any organization, whether it be on the fringe of society or mainstream. I do hope that you would consider rewriting this proposed resolution in a way that unites us as a town and offer my assistance to the committee responsible should you desire it. It is my hope to address you and the town during the time of public comment but I forward this letter to you in case I am unable to be present. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully, your fellow town member,

Timothy E. Sandeno

Dear Gorham Town Councilors:

My name is John P Ross and we have lived on Deering Rd in Gorham since 2009. Very rarely do I speak out on matters that concern this beloved town, however, the Proposed Order #20-95 compels me to not be silent. I am asking that this letter be read at your upcoming Council meeting on Tuesday, September 1, 2020.

I have deep concerns with Black Lives Matters. To endorse this group would be to endorse Marxism and to discriminate against every race represented in Gorham. They are closely linked with Antifa and if you go to the Antifa web site it will take you to the Fund raising web site of Democratic Presidential Nominee, Joe Biden. Black Lives Matters has been largely funded by Marxists such as George Soros and has been largely responsible for the civil unrest our nation is experiencing in these difficult days. This entire movement is anti God, anti democracy and promotes a culture of radical civil disobedience. Do we really believe going down this path is going to lift up our community of Gorham? Most citizens would say, "Absolutely Not!"

There is no question racism exists and there is in many places injustice to "the least of these." I do not believe this town has 'systemic racism' as this order wants us to believe. I understand the fear in the hearts of many and the confusion of the times we are in. However, I believe the town has the resources and the good will to address any of these issues through dialogue and listening to each other rather than endorsing a radical group such as Black Lives Matters. We can still and must confront racism and injustice without staining our good name as a great place to raise your family. We have much going on for us. We have a peaceful community where neighbors look after neighbors and are there for each other in times of crisis. We have one of the best Police departments you can find anywhere and a place where we can still feel safe as we go about our business.

I would respectfully urge every member of the Gorham Town Council to reject any reference to Black Lives Matter and to vote this proposed order down and to support Charlie Pearson's letter. Please do not become stained with the reputation of being partisan when up until now it has been avoided. Any decision to go in any other direction would send the wrong message to our community and would have a rippling effect beyond our town line.

Thank you for your time and May God Bless America.

Rev John P Ross

15 Deering Rd; Gorham, Maine 04038

To The Town Council,

We would like our voice heard on how we feel as a family from Gorham at tonights meeting regarding the proposed BLM. We don't agree with it. We don't agree that people harbor systemic racism. We feel upset to the fact that because we are white, or not a minority, we are being labeled as being systemically racist, when we are not. We respect all colors and have taught our children that. Our country has laws in place that already address this. We don't feel our town has a problem with systemic racism. This is creating a problem that doesn't exist here. We support our police and for the safety of our children want to keep them in our schools, with their uniforms on. As far as school goes, if any of this is added to a curriculum it is our feeling that it is a gross overreach of schooling for our children. It's not ok with us. It's not up to the school system to parent our children.

Thank you,
Sara and Tim Wing

Good Afternoon,

To promote anti violence in the communities without adopting the BLM movement which has turned radical and has caused some unrest in our community, I have an idea for a plan that could be adopted into curriculums in lieu of adding BLM classes. Thinking about a 'Rise A.B.O.V.E.' theme - Adopting & Building On Virtues for Everyone. (Focusing on character traits such as Honesty. Trustworthiness. Compassion. Caring. Respect. Responsibility. Self-control. Charitableness. Citizenship. Cooperation. Courage. Courtesy. Dependability. Empathy. Fairness. Forgiveness. Friendship. Generosity. Gratitude. Honor. Initiative. Integrity. Joyfulness. Justness. Kindness. Loyalty. Moderation. Optimism. Peacefulness. Perseverance. Prudence. Reliability. Reverence. Self-discipline. Sensitivity. Sincerity. Tolerance. Understanding. Unselfishness. Grit. Self-regulation. Serenity. Tactfulness) I have began writing and researching courses. We already have an entire month for Black history which is still implemented in the curriculums so instead of adding a divisional approach such as BLM, we would be instilling positive fundamentals into young and adolescent children that they could carry with them throughout their lifetimes. And it's for EVEYRONE. That way the children can still learn the history and adopt their own decisions on how it affects their future, without a biased opinion or influence to be swayed in one direction or another.

The new addition to the curriculum would promote unity rather than separation or furthermore segregation. It is inclusive of ALL students regardless of race and supports their higher learning with tools that promote a high moral standard. Thus combative of racism, bullying or any other negative behaviors. It would be much more cohesive and could easily be implemented, rather than focusing on just one topic, such as BLM exclusively. Here is an in depth look at a curriculum developed by Dr. Michele Borba, who specializes in character, social development, bullying and parenting. <https://micheleborba.com/creating-monthly-character-themes-five-steps-to-teach-any-character-trait-in-students/>

There is no topic that could not be addressed under this proposal. The difference in this one versus the BLM proposal is that this one focuses on teaching the tools necessary to overcome any life obstacle. Race could still be a subject of interest but along with the subject, the children would develop strategies and human characteristics to achieve longterm solutions. It's a win-win for EVEYRONE.

I hope you find this proposal a suitable one for our Gorham youth. I have received an abundance of positive feedback from the community.

Sincerely,

Kylee Densmore
Gorham Resident

Dear Town Council Members,

I will not be able to make the town council meeting this evening. You have my permission for this short letter to be read publicly. I have lived in Gorham for the past twenty five years and raised four children here. Please do not pass a resolution that contains BLM affiliation. I support a resolution that is not political or divisive.

Best Regards,
Barry Paulin

Moved by Councilor Hartwell, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and VOTED to amend the resolution to replace the word citizens with residents in the sixth WHEREAS. **7 yeas**

Councilor Kuech moved to call the question, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and VOTED. **6 yeas, 1 nay (Hartwell)**

Order #20-95 was VOTED 6 yeas, 1 nay (Hartwell)

NEW BUSINESS

Order #20-96 Moved by Councilor Hartwell, seconded by Councilor Hager and ORDERED, that the Town Council adopts the following resolution:

RESOLUTION WELCOMING ALL PEOPLE INTO OUR COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, native and foreign-born residents of many faiths and cultures have richly contributed to the quality of life in Gorham;

WHEREAS, Gorham prides itself on being a community fostering neither fear nor division, but instead respect and tolerance of difference;

WHEREAS, we, the elected officials of Gorham, have an important leadership role in representing our Town's collective values against racism, bias, discrimination, violence, and hate;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Town of Gorham:

1. Welcomes residents of all cultures, celebrates the benefits of a pluralistic society, and respects the right of every person or group to live and practice their self-determined identity, culture, and faith without fear;
2. Condemns actions of hate, violence, or discrimination directed against any citizen or group, including but not limited to immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and any persons unjustly or unfairly treated due to their religion, ethnicity, race, class, nationality, country of origin, age, ability, sexuality, or gender;
3. Affirms that anyone targeted on the basis of such differences should be able to turn to the Town's officials and fellow citizens without fear of discrimination;
4. Encourages forums and other opportunities where civil and respectful dialogue may take place to promote better understanding and mutual appreciation among our residents;
5. Commits to substantive action to combat racism, bias, discrimination, violence, and hate.

The following people spoke in support of Order #20-96:

Melissa Spicer

The following people spoke in opposition of Order #20-96:

Miriam Beshir, Kyle Ouillette, Naomi Schucker and James Brockman

Order #20-96 VOTED. 6 yeas, 1 nay (Wilder Cross)

Order #20-97

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Kuech and ORDERED, that the Town Council authorize the Town Clerk to issue the warrant for the November 3, 2020 Annual Municipal Election; and

Be It Further Ordered, that the polls be open from 7:00am until 8:00pm; and

Be It Further Ordered, that the Town Council appoints the following persons for the designated voting districts and if any of the following should fail to serve, the Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Clerk to appoint substitutes:

District 1-1 – Susan Emerson, Warden and Laurel Smith, Ward Clerk

District 1-2 – Katherine Corbett, Warden and Cornelia Loughran, Ward Clerk

District 2 – Martha Towle, Warden and Nancy Kenty, Ward Clerk

Central – Paula Nystrom, Warden and Nanette Belanger, Ward Clerk

Be It Further Ordered, that the Registrar of Voters be in session during the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm on Tuesday, October 27, 2020 and Wednesday, October 28, 2020; between the hours of 8:00am and 6:30pm on Thursday October 29, 2020 between the hours of 8:00am and 1:00pm on Friday October 30, 2020 and between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm on Monday November 2, 2020, and

Be it Further Ordered, that the Town Clerk be authorized to process absentee ballots on Tuesday, October 27th thru Tuesday, November 3rd starting at 10:00am each day. **7 yeas**

Order #20-98

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Kuech and ORDERED, that the Town Council approve all qualifying applications from the Senior Property Tax Relief Program as reviewed and recommended by staff. **7 yeas**

Order #20-99

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Hartwell and ORDERED, that the Town Council adopts the following resolution:

A Resolution officially naming the Gorham Fire Department Emergency Operations Center and Training Facility.

WHEREAS, Robert Lefebvre retired after 36 years as Gorham's Fire Chief;

WHEREAS, during those 36 years Chief Lefebvre modernized the Gorham Fire Department and incorporated many advancements including regionalization, shared services, fire prevention and full time staff; and

WHEREAS, Chief Lefebvre played a major role in promoting requirements for residential fire suppression systems in Gorham; and WHEREAS, throughout his career Chief Lefebvre has continuously supported public safety in the Town by ensuring that the services that the Gorham Fire Department were second to none, and that the department received the staffing, funding, training and technology it needed to provide the citizens it protected with this level of service; and

WHEREAS, the Gorham Town Council wishes to recognize Chief Lefebvre for his dedicated service to the Town, its residents and his commitment over the last 36 years;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Gorham Town Council that the Gorham Fire Department EOC and training facility be renamed the "Robert Lefebvre Emergency Operations Center and Public Safety Training Facility".

Order #20-99 was VOTED. 7 yeas

Order #20-100

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Hager and ORDERED, that the Town Council authorizes a bond referendum question for the November 3, 2020 election in the amount of \$5,689,000 for capital projects, and;

Be It Further Ordered, that the Town Council schedules a public hearing for October 6, 2020.

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Hartwell and VOTED to amend the order to break down the question into two parts, one the Field Lighting and two the rest. **3 yeas, 4 nays (Shepard, Wilder cross, Hager, Kuech) Amendment fails**

Order #20-100 VOTED. 7 yeas

Order #20-101

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Hager and ORDERED, that the Town Council authorize a referendum for November 3, 2020, on amending Section 202 of the Town's Charter to clarify the qualifications of office for a Town Council member as follows:

Sec. 202. Qualifications. ~~Councilmen~~ Council members shall be qualified electors of the Town and shall reside in the Town during their term of office. ~~They~~ A Council member shall hold no other paid office or position of employment with the Town or the Department of Education (Gorham School District) during the term for which the Council member was elected to the Council ~~of emolument or profit under the Town Charter or Ordinances~~. If a ~~Councilman~~ Council member shall cease to possess any of these qualifications or shall be convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, his/her office shall immediately become vacant.

Be It Further Ordered that the Town Council schedules a public hearing for October 6, 2020.

NOTE – Additions Underlined and Deletions ~~Struck~~.

Order #20-101 VOTED. 7 yeas

Order #20-102

Moved by Councilor Hartwell, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and ORDERED, that the Town Council authorizes a referendum question for the November 3, 2020 election asking voters if they approve establishing a Charter Commission for the purpose of revising the Gorham Town Charter pursuant to M.R.S.A. 30-A Chapter III and;

Be It Further Ordered, that the Town Council schedules a public hearing on October 6, 2020.

Order #20-102 VOTED. 1 yea, 6 nays (Phillips, Shepard, Wilder Cross, Pratt, Hager, Kuech)

Order #20-103

Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Hager and ORDERED, that the Town Council forwards to the Ordinance Committee, for their review and recommendation, amending the Narragansett Mixed-Use District to allow for personal services and to address side and rear setbacks. **7 yeas**

Order #20-104

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Hager and ORDERED, that the Town Council designates the following fee schedule for trash bags and waste collection tags, and;

Be It Further Ordered, that the Town Council authorizes the discontinuance of trash bags sales starting January 1, 2021 with the waste collection program transitioning to tag sales.

New Sale Prices Effective Next Distribution / Order of Bags & Tags

Small Trash Bags: \$2.15

Large Trash Bags: \$4.30

Small Bag Tag: \$1.50

Large Bag Tag: \$3.00

*Note: This order authorizes new fees for trash bags until their discontinuance on or about January 1, 2021 where they will no longer be sold in stores or at municipal facilities. Existing bags purchased by residents will continue to be honored until their supply is exhausted.

Starting January 1, 2021 only waste collection tags will be sold for curbside collection. These tags will continue to be available at local stores and municipal facilities and are adhered to a trash bag signifying to the Town's waste collection contractor that the resident has paid for collection.

Order #20-104 VOTED, 7 yeas

Order #20-105

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Kuech and ORDERED, that the Town Council authorizes the following resolution joining the new MMA WCSIP program as follows:

WHEREAS, Maine Municipal Association (hereinafter "MMA") provides risk management services and workers' compensation coverage; and

WHEREAS, MMA developed the Workers' Compensation Safety Incentive Program (hereinafter "the Program") to help reduce the incidents and impact of workplace injuries by implementing WC claim best practices; and

WHEREAS, MMA will provide necessary written program information, and offer assistance to participants; and

WHEREAS, WC Fund members that participate in the Program and complete the required activities, will have the opportunity to earn a credit to their annual contribution; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Gorham is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees, citizens, and visiting public; and

WHEREAS, the Program will help enhance such an environment and promote a self-sustaining culture of safety with participating members,

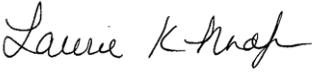
Now Be It Resolved by the GorhamTownCouncil to elect to participate in the MMA Workers' Compensation Safety Incentive Program.

Order #20-105 VOTED, 7 yeas

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Pratt and VOTED to adjourn. **7 yeas**

Time of Adjournment: 11:15pm

A True Record of Meeting
09/01/2020

ATTEST  _____ 09/02/2020
Laurie Nordfors, Town Clerk